

# HEALTH

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## **Raising Healthy Girls to Become Healthy Women**

By the time a young girl enters kindergarten, she displays some of the personality traits that she will carry throughout her life: an aptitude for math, a sharp wit. Likewise, it is at a very young age that girl develops the habits and behaviors that will influence her overall health throughout her life. Yet all of her choices, including her health choices, are still ahead of her.

We can have the greatest impact on the lifelong health of very young girls by giving them the information, guidance, and resources needed to make the choices that will lead to healthy lives.

Below are tips to help you learn more about ways to improve the health and safety of your daughters and how to help equip them to have better lives.

### **Health Tips**

#### **1. Eat Healthy**

It is said that an apple a day keeps the doctor away. There's more truth to this saying than we once thought. What you eat and drink and what you don't can make a difference to your health. Eating five or more fruits and vegetables a day can play a part in improving your health and may reduce the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. Set an example for your daughters by having a balanced diet and watching how much you eat. Children learn their eating styles from parents and adapt to what is made available to them. Provide your daughters with a variety of fruits and vegetables so that they can develop healthy eating patterns for life.

#### **2. Maintain a Healthy Weight**

Obesity is at an all time high in the United States, and the epidemic is getting worse. Those who are overweight or obese have increased risks for diseases and conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Make sure your daughters eat well, get regular exercise, and see their health care providers regularly to make sure they are on the right track in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

#### **3. Get Moving**

More than 60 percent of American men and women do not get enough physical activity to provide health benefits. It doesn't take a lot of time or money, but it does take commitment. Teach your daughters to start slowly, work up to a satisfactory level, and not overdo it. You can develop a routine or do something different every day. Make exercise a part of your daughter's life at an early age by finding fun ways to stay in shape and feel good, such as dancing, walking the dog, jogging in the park, or gardening.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

